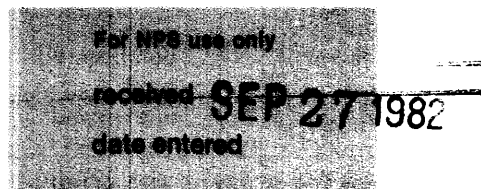


100-2024-0018  
EXP. 12/31/84

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic Duncan House

and/or common Same

## 2. Location

street & number 301 North Main Street NA not for publication

city, town Franklin NA vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~

state Kentucky code 021 county Simpson code 107

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Nancy Carol Blewett Guthrie

street & number 1110 Woodmont Circle

city, town Franklin NA vicinity of state Kentucky

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Simpson County Court House

street & number Main Street

city, town Franklin state Kentucky

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Survey of Historic Sites in KY. has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date April 2, 1979  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Council

city, town Frankfort state Kentucky

## 7. Description

**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Duncan House is located one block from the Simpson County Court House and public square in the center of Franklin, Kentucky.

The present appearance consists of a two story brick house (Map 1, Section A) with gable standing seam tin roof and two end chimneys and full length two story Italianate porch on the front facade (Photos 1,2,3,4,5). A two story brick ell (Map 1, Section B) with frame mansard roof bay is added to rear of structure (Photos 6,7,8). A two story flat roof frame ell (Map 1, Section C) is added to north elevation (Photos 9,10). A one story frame ell (Map 1, Section D) with gabled roof is added to west elevation (Photos 10,11). A one story flat roof open side porch (Map 1, Section E) is added to south elevation (Photo 12).

It appears as if the two storied brick section (Map 1, Section A) with the two story porch comprises the earliest portion of the structure built circa 1855. The early section contains window sashes, interior doors, and interior and exterior millwork different than the added sections B,C,D,E (Photos 13,14). Although no specific documentation on building dates of the various additions to the Duncan House can be substantiated, the additions appear to be early ones during the third and fourth quarters of the nineteenth century evidenced by the materials and workmanship contained in those additions.

The physical condition of the house is fair on the exterior with a deteriorated roof, some rotted wooden brackets and cornice boards, a missing portion of the iron railing on the second floor front porch, and some deteriorated mortar joints. The interior likewise is in fair condition, but still contains all original architectural details such as light fixtures, open staircase, baseboards, mantels, doors, and millwork appropriate to the particular section's addition (Photos 15,16,17,18,19,20,21,22).

The structure has served as an apartment house for a number of years, but is currently vacant. The present owner is planning a complete rehabilitation of the Duncan House into three or four apartments by utilizing the existing interior arrangement and architectural features of the original structure and its later additions, thereby returning the property to a rehabilitated and economic state in the community. The owner plans to take advantage of the tax benefits of the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981, therefore it will be a certified rehabilitation project completed in accordance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
			<input type="checkbox"/> science
			<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
			<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
			<input type="checkbox"/> theater
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** ca. 1855      **Builder/Architect** Unknown

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The George Duncan House is architecturally significant as the finest expression of residential Italianate architecture in Franklin, Kentucky. Built c.1855 and subsequently enlarged, the Duncan House is important as it illustrates the evolution of the Italianate style during the third quarter of the nineteenth century. The stylistic design and integrity of materials make the two-story decorative wooden porch a singularly important feature of this house. The side and rear elevations, while lacking individual distinction, represent a distinctive assemblage of period Italianate architecture. Overall the Duncan House retains a high degree of integrity and a variety of features characteristic to the Italianate period.

The Duncan House, located in the heart of Franklin, Kentucky, is a prominent historic structure to Simpson Countians and fine local example of Italianate architecture. There is a house with a very similar front porch exactly one block south of the courthouse on Main Street. It is interesting to note that the Duncan House is also exactly a block north of the courthouse on the same side of Main Street. It is believed that Dr. George W. Duncan built this house, but cannot be documented due primarily to a fire in 1882 which destroyed the Simpson County Courthouse and the majority of its records. According to remaining deed records, the property was owned by Dr. Duncan for more than 50 years and owned prior to the burning of the courthouse in 1882. Also, according to courthouse records, Dr. Duncan died in 1905 which would then place the date of the house circa 1855.

As detailed earlier in Section 7, the original portion of the Duncan House was enlarged on several occasions probably due to the fact that Dr. & Mrs. Duncan had eight children and necessitated enlargement to the home to accommodate the growing family.

For many years, the Duncan House housed an unusual museum containing Indian artifacts, a collection of birds prepared by a good taxidermist, artificial palms with live-looking snakes suspended from the branches, and many other items from foreign countries. One of the most interesting phases of the collection was what looked like to be a library of books with titles of the various kinds of trees found in Simpson County. Each book in reality, was a piece of wood with the name of the wood printed on the outside. The carving and finishing of the books had been done by a skilled workman. The book collection, which was in a cabinet to itself, looked like a fine library. At the death of Mrs. Duncan in 1922, the contents of the museum became scattered, some going to the Kentucky Historical Society.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Simpson County Deed Books 45 and 138, Will Book 1, and Administrator's and Executor's Settlement Book 4. Simpson County Courthouse.

F.A. Battey and W.H. Perrin, History of Kentucky Illustrated. 1886.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property One

Quadrangle name Franklin

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A 

1	6	5	3	7	7	2	0	4	0	6	4	1	7	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

E 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

F 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

G 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

H 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

**Verbal boundary description and justification** The boundary begins at a point(1) at the NW corner of the intersection of N.Main and Washington Streets, and proceeds west along the property line for 156 feet to a point(2), thence north along the property line for 70 feet to a point(3), thence east along the property

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Scott Guthrie

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date August 2, 1982

street & number 1110 Woodmont Circle telephone 502/586-4421

city or town Franklin state Kentucky

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Mary Cecelia Spelt

title State Historic Preservation Officer date Sept 21, 1982

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register of Historic Places.

Selma Byers Keeper of the National Register 10/29/82

Attach:

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
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received  
date entered

Continuation sheet Duncan House  
Simpson County, KY Item number 8 Page 2

Dr. George W. Duncan was born January 26, 1842, in Simpson County, Kentucky, the tenth of twelve children born to Sanford and Nancy Duncan. George Duncan was reared on a farm and received a good education. In 1840, he entered Cumberland College at Princeton. When the college was transferred to Lebanon, he returned to Franklin and finished his education. In 1846, he commenced the study of medicine with Drs. Briggs and Wright of Bowling Green. In 1848, he graduated from Louisville Medical University and located and commenced his medical practice in Mitchellville, Tennessee. In 1859, he located in Franklin, Kentucky, where he was successfully engaged in the practice of medicine for many years. He also held the position of post surgeon during the Civil War. He had a considerable interest in the study of prehistoric races and made valuable discoveries in his excavations of mounds and graves. Dr. Duncan's wife, Dorinda Puryear Duncan whom he married in 1860, was a hard student and an interesting ornithologist. She succeeded in making one of the finest collections in the state and one of the finest private collections in the United States.

In October 1922, the property passed to the Blewett family (by deed to Eura B. Blewett, wife of Eli H. Blewett) and has remained in the family to present. The current owner, Nancy Carol Blewett Guthrie is the grand daughter of Eura and Eli Blewett. The owner is planning a complete rehabilitation of the Duncan House for use as apartments.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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Continuation sheet Duncan House  
Simpson County, KY Item number 10 Page 2

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line for 156 feet to a point (4), and then south along the property line for 70 feet to the point of origin (1) (Map 1).

The house sits on a one acre lot in the center of Franklin, Kentucky, and one block north of the Simpson County Courthouse and public square. No other buildings are included within the nominated area.

Duncan House

